

SOLID WASTE *works*

Winter/Spring 2011

Solid Waste Works is a quarterly employee newsletter published by the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management

Rain or Shine, DSWM's Mission Remains the Same

With the recent County Mayor recall election and the County Manager's resignation, our County government and leadership are clearly in transition.

But it's good to know at least one thing will always remain the same: our dedication to the missions of the County and the Department.

Regardless of who is in charge, we serve Miami-Dade residents each day with profes-

sionalism, courtesy and dedication. Our customers depend on us every single day to, as our mission statement says, provide them "with exceptional waste collection, recycling and disposal services that protect, preserve and improve our environment and the quality of life in our community."

County services have never ended when one administration handed the reins of power over

to the next, and there's no reason for that to happen now. After all, our customers continue to require our services for the betterment of the community and the protection of the public health and the environment.

We should continue to focus on doing the best we can for our customers. Never before has it been more important for us to ensure we're "Delivering Excellence Every Day."



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

"The smallest good deed is better than the grandest intention."— Author Unknown

"Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."— James Matthew Barrie

"How beautiful a day can be when kindness touches it!"— George Elliston

"Fashion your life as a garland of beautiful deeds."— Buddha

"To be doing good deeds is man's most glorious task."— Sophocles, Greek Playwright

Dear DSWM Staff,

These simple quotes all speak volumes on the nature and importance of good deeds. Throughout this issue of Solid Waste Works, you'll read stories that demonstrate our Department's efforts to make life a little brighter for our neighbors. Here's a sample of how our good deeds are making a difference in our community.

In late fall, three Garbage Division employees went above and beyond the call of duty to help an elderly resident search through a truckload of garbage for her wedding ring and other cherished items. What an incredible demonstration of "Delivering Excellence Every Day."

Our United Way campaign is another instance of how the Solid Waste family rises to the occasion when asked to help. Over the last several months, you've participated in dozens of fundraising events that support the United Way's network of social service agencies. You've taken part in baked goods sales, raffles, breakfasts, lunches, lunchtime spa services, ice cream socials and countless other activities to help us reach our fundraising goal. At least 23 of you took time out of your busy schedules to serve lunch to the homeless at a Salvation Army shelter. And in grand style, you supported the Dr. Martin

Luther King Soul Food Dinner Dance Celebration that allowed us to donate \$55,000 to the United Way.

Probably the most poignant act of kindness was recently performed by Solid Waste family member Mark Brown as he stopped a suspect from fleeing the scene of a deadly traffic accident. While Mark has been commended by the Mayor, the Board of County Commissioners and the Miami-Dade Police Department, he humbly considers himself an average citizen. Given his selfless act of bravery, I'm sure that you'll agree that he's a hero.

These are just a few ways our good deeds are making a difference in our community. Now more than ever, our acts of kindness, whether performed individually or as a member of the Solid Waste Management family, are having a significant impact on the lives of those in our community whose names and stories we may never know. For all that you've done and I know you will continue to do, please accept my heartfelt thanks and appreciation.

Kathleen Woods-Richardson
Director

A "Super Citizen"

Nearly every day, Miami-Dade resident Maria Suarez gets up early to tidy up the swale area in front of her house. Mrs. Suarez, who has lived in the same home near Cutler Bay for about 40 years, is also known in her neighborhood for decorating her lawn and the swale area with dolls for holidays and other seasonal events.

Perhaps that's why she won a "Super Citizen Award" from the Homestead



Maria Suarez poses for a picture in front of her home with Osvaldo Urbay, Anthony Staton and Alejandro Lorenzo of the Bus Stop Litter Crew South.

chapter of a national sorority, along with a nice "Clean and Green Communities" sign from the Department for the swale area next to her home.

"I did it all with my heart," says Mrs. Suarez, explaining what inspires her to work so hard. "I do it with all my love for the community."

Mrs. Suarez's home is near a school and she enjoys it when the school kids ask her about her often elaborate displays.

For example, when classes start in the fall, she'll have dolls wearing the local school's uniform. On Labor Day, the dolls are dressed as workers. She even has a "wounded veteran," a mannequin in a military uniform and crutches to commemorate Veteran's Day.

"I collect dolls, that's my hobby," Mrs. Suarez said.

But Mrs. Suarez acknowledges that she can't keep the neighborhood clean all by herself. So she wrote the Department Director a nice letter commending the work of the bus stop litter crew that operates in her area.

"They do a great job on all Caribbean Boulevard (the street Mrs. Suarez lives on)," she wrote.

Mrs. Suarez further complimented the crew for keeping the area clean and straightening out the trash cans along the street.

She ended the letter: "Well Mrs. Woods and all your Department, receive my love and gratitude for everything that your Department does for all of us in the community."

It's Miami-Dade County Employee Family and Friends Night at the UniverSoul Circus!

This past February, the UniverSoul Circus came to town! Created more than 17 years ago in Atlanta, the UniverSoul Circus is considered one of the top three circuses in the United States, along with Ringling Brothers Barnum and Bailey and Cirque de Soleil. The circus is very well known for its interactive fusion of circus arts, theater, and a variety of musical styles including Pop, Classic R&B, Latin, Jazz, Gospel and Hip Hop.

While the UniverSoul Circus was in Miami, it celebrated a special Miami-Dade County Solid Waste Management Employee Family and Friends Night at Sun Light Stadium. Thousands of circus fans came from all over South Florida to be entertained at the UniverSoul Circus. They enjoyed a unique extravaganza that included magicians, the trapeze, clowns, animal acts, acrobats and more put on by an international cast of performers and emceed by ringmaster Tony Tone. DSWM Director Kathy Woods-Richardson had a special role as guest ringmaster. The DSWM was well represented with about 100 employees, their friends and their families attending.



DSWM Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson serves as guest ringmaster at the UniverSoul Circus.

Information for the "Did You Know" and "Recycling Savings" sections was unavailable at press time. Both sections will return next issue.

CONGRATULATIONS

A total of 27 DSWM employees were rewarded for their hard work with a promotion recently. The following is a listing of the employees and their new positions:

Division Director 2, Landfill
Francisco Gomez

Maintenance Superintendent
Omar Castro

SWM, Fleet Management Coord.
Nicolas Cortina

SWM Landfill Superintendent
Surendra Dyal

Transfer Station Superintendent
Anthony Brannen-Starling
Carlos Marrero

Trash Crane Operator
Darrell Hightower
Todd Taylor
David Williams

Trash Truck Driver 1
Bobby Arrington
Elnora Coleman
Jermar Davis
Herman Ezell
Edwin Feliciano
Theodore Gulley
Ronald Johnson
Bryan Powell
Lenford Riley
Robert Soto

Trash Truck Driver 2
Armand Dely
Jarvis Jeanty
Veres Monroe

Waste Attendant 2
Zanell Morrow

Waste Truck Driver
Duane Thompson
Henry Riley
Alvin Clarke
Joe Tillman Jr.

Welcome to the following County employees who transferred to the DSWM:

Account Clerk
Katy Fernandez
Patrice Myers

Administrative Officer 3
Marie Alexander
Mark Brown

Administrative Secretary
Yanira Bravo-Soriano

Automotive Equip. Operator 1
Omar Desvergunat

Cashier
Tiesha Craig

Deputy Director (Designate), SWM Operations
Paul Mauriello

Office Support Specialist 2
Maria Calonje
Wilmette Williams

Personnel Technician
David Mejia
Jollivette Spear

Special Project Administrator 1
Stacy Santos

SWM, Liens & Collections Mgr.
Sammie Walthour

Systems Analyst Programmer 1
Cesar Torres

Waste Attendant 1
Reajon Baker
Joann Conner
Jose Luis Diaz
Quamika Dunn
Terrance Henderson
Willie Mason
Tommy Streeter

Waste Enforcement Officer 1
Harrison Crenshaw III
Manuel Delgado
Gerardo Gutierrez
Daniel Montalvo
Belkis Zarate

Welcome to the following new hires to the DSWM team:

Waste Attendant 1
Gloria Hanks
Alex Victor
Tavares Ward
Yvette Washington
Darrell Wilcox

Congratulations, best wishes and a heartfelt thank you for a job well done to DSWM employees who have recently retired:

58th Street Trash
Alberto Cardenas
Trash Truck Driver 1
22 Years

Ernest Lewis
Trash Crane Operator
30 Years

Scale Operators
Edgerton McIntosh
Waste Scale Operator
16 Years

West Transfer Station
Rochelle Spain
Asst. Transfer Station Super.
34 Years

St. Clair Washington
Trash Truck Driver 2
24 Years

Heroes in Our Midst

Ask Mark Brown if he's a hero and the modest Administrative Officer 3 from the Director's Office will tell you "no." But what he did that fateful day in February clearly says "yes."

Mark was on his lunch break, headed east on NW 79th Street near the DSWM's headquarters at the MLK Center one day in early February, when he saw a driver hit two young men at a bus stop, fatally wounding one and sending the other to the hospital. The driver allegedly took off after the accident.

His initial reaction? "First it was disbelief, I guess, that was the first thing, like 'wow, is it real?'" he told a local television station.

But then Mark sprang into action. "Something just told me to try and help," he said.

Mark chased the alleged hit-and-run driver for a short distance then rammed the driver's car to stop him and hold him until the police came. If that wasn't enough, Mark then protected the driver from an angry mob that formed at the scene.

James Loftus, the Director of the Miami-Dade Police Department, lauded Mark. He told reporters "We expect it from our cops, but when our citizens do that, it's truly phenomenal."

The father of the slain young man told reporters about Mark: "He's a hero... he did a good job. God Bless him, too."

The driver was arrested by police and charged with DUI manslaughter, leaving the scene of an accident involving death and serious bodily injuries, and DUI property damage.

Mark added, "I'm just an average citizen who's working and concerned about the family." Most recently, he received an award for his actions from the Northside District Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Miami-Dade Police Department, as well as a commendation from the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners.



Mark Brown receives a plaque from the Northside District Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Miami-Dade Police Department.

CORNER

Delivering Excellence Every Day

DSWM Employees Go “Above and Beyond”

DSWM employees know working at Solid Waste can be difficult and dirty work. But recently, several employees stationed out of the South Dade Landfill—Larry Wilson, Gregory Ferguson and James Shorter—got even dirtier to help a customer.

Kay Bismarck, a DSWM customer, threw her garbage out one day late last year as the more than 320,000 customers of the DSWM do every few days. What made this particular day different, though, was what else was thrown out accidentally.

“Recently, my wedding ring and other keepsakes were inadvertently put into our household garbage and sent to the county landfill,” Ms. Bismarck wrote in a letter to the editor of the Miami Herald.

Ms. Bismarck contacted the DSWM and expected to hear, in essence, “It’s not our problem; sorry, we can’t help.” What she got instead was Waste Supervisor 1 Larry Wilson helping to locate the truck that collected Ms. Bismarck’s garbage that day. And Waste Truck Driver Gregory Ferguson and Waste Collector James Shorter wading through bags of garbage to help Ms. Bismarck find her prized possessions.

This story ends on a bittersweet note. Despite everyone’s best efforts, Ms. Bismarck’s wedding ring could not be located. But, as noted before, Ms. Bismarck wrote a wonderful letter to the editor of the Miami



Gregory Ferguson, Larry Wilson and James Shorter.

Herald detailing the efforts of the DSWM employees.

“...the loss was partially offset by the comfort of putting real faces on employees with genuine smiles who work in ugly conditions on our behalf,” Ms. Bismarck wrote. “Thanks, gentlemen.”

Thanks indeed.

County Commissioners, DSWM Director Honored as South Florida Freedom’s Sisters

Miami-Dade County Commissioners Audrey M. Edmonson and Barbara Jordan, Department Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson, and 17 other notable African-American women from South Florida were honored recently by the Ford Motor Company Fund as South Florida Freedom’s Sisters.

The women were chosen by Ford for their dedication to social and humanitarian causes. The South Florida Freedom’s Sisters parallels the national Freedom’s Sisters exhibit, which honors 20 prominent African-American women known for their work in the realm of civil rights.

“It was a challenge to select just 20 South Florida Freedom’s Sisters as all of the nominees truly embodied the spirit of the nationally recognized Freedom’s Sisters,” said Pamela Alexander, director of the Ford Motor Company Fund.

The women were honored at a luncheon supported by the efforts of the Embrace Girls Foundation and included a poetry reading by Sonia Sanchez, one of the national Freedom’s Sisters.



Girls from the Embrace Girls Foundation join the South Florida Freedom’s Sisters for a photo.

DSWM Supports the United Way

The DSWM continued with its United Way fundraising efforts with a number of events and sales. Here are highlights of a few of the largest events that took place:

Mid-Day Karaoke

December's *Mid-Day Karaoke Event Benefiting United Way* was a smash hit! The fundraiser was sponsored by the Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs and Information Services & Technology Divisions. Funds raised from admission, participating singers, performers, their sponsors, and food and CD sales all benefited United Way. It was excellently hosted by Stacey McDuffie and Rey Perez. Serving as judges were Jeanmarie "J. Lo" Massa, Debbie "Paula" Penha-Cumbermack and Mark "Randy" Brown. Prizes were awarded for the following categories:

- Best Female Vocalist - Stacey McDuffie (Planning Division)
Runner-Up Female Vocalist - Olga Espinosa-Anderson (Procurement Division)
- Best Male Vocalist - Rey Perez (Information Services Division)
Runner-Up Male Vocalist - Payne Bivens (Trash Division)
- Best Performer - Tawanda McNair (Corrections Department)
- Revelation of the Year - Arun D'Souza (Information Services Division)

A round of applause goes out to all of the participating singers, performers and other Special Guests which made the event such a huge success. Among those performing were Stacey McDuffie, Rey Perez, Olga Espinosa-Anderson, Christopher Rose, Alvin McCray, Aneisha Daniels, Payne Bivens, Veronica Richardson-Clark, Arun D'Souza, Margaret Lee, Debbie Blanco, Yanira Bravo-Soriano, Oria Moreta, Luis Vargas and Tawanda McNair. Kudos to all DSWM staff who helped raise \$566 for the United Way!



The United Way was the biggest winner at the Mid-Day Karaoke event.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Department of Solid Waste Management held a United Way Fundraiser at the Miami-Dade County Fair & Expo Center. The event raised a total of \$55,000 and was attended by over 250 employees and guests. The event kicked off with a cocktail reception and dinner was filled with soulful varieties of food to include BBQ ribs, collard greens, macaroni and cheese and potato salad to name a few.

Back by popular demand was music by jazz artist Jon Saxx, along with performances by the Motown Musical Review. The dance floor was filled with guests who danced to the sounds of old school and new school music. It was truly a night to remember.



A ceremonial check of \$55,000 is presented to the United Way at the DSWM's Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Celebration.

Other United Way events...



The ladies of DSWM at the United Way Women's Leadership Breakfast.



Vivian Cortina and Tavodda Turner of the Director's Office get ready to join other DSWM employees in serving lunch to the homeless at a Salvation Army shelter.

Keeping West Transfer Station Going

Despite the huge level of traffic—especially during outages to the Resources Recovery Facility in nearby Doral—trucks seem to go in and out of the West Transfer Station in a short amount of time.

You can thank Ron Hill, Senior Waste Equipment Operator, for that. The 28-year DSWM veteran's job includes keeping traffic flowing at the busy West Transfer Station near Westchester.



Senior Waste Equipment Operator Ron Hill helps keep the West Transfer Station running smoothly.

"He always finds a way to get customers in and out in a timely manner, he's good at that," says Ron's Supervisor, Charles Lovely, Superintendent of the West Transfer Station.

Ron does more than just direct traffic. He also makes sure heavy equipment, vehicles and machinery are up and running.

And then there are the intangibles he brings to his job.

"I believe in coming to work and seeing what I can do to make the job better and easier," said Ron.

When he's not at work, Ron enjoys spending time with his nearly two-year-old grandson, watching NASCAR racing and other sporting events, and going to the gym.

SAFETY

CORNER

The DSWM is committed to a proactive safety program that promotes safety awareness through development and implementation of safety procedures, which seek to reduce injuries and accidents.

Having a positive attitude towards safety is the first step in creating a safer work environment. If you see something unsafe, report it to your immediate supervisor. Do not ignore the unsafe situation or think that someone else will take care of it. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Not only does staying injury-free protect your life and income, it also reduces stress levels and keeps family lives from being hindered. Injuries also affect our ability to provide excellent services to the citizens of Miami-Dade County.

58th Street Construction Update

The 58th Street facility building is currently undergoing a facelift. Work is in progress to refurbish the building. As of press time, construction on the building is at 40 percent completion and should be finished by fall of this year.



A work in progress: the 58th Street facility.



Delivering Excellence Every Day



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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Office Plaza, 2525 N.W. 62nd Street, Suite 5100, Miami, FL 33147 • Switchboard (305) 514-6666 • Customer Service 3-1-1 • www.miamidade.gov/dswm

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